

ABSTRACT

Accordingly, there is disclosed herein an augmented Fibre Channel (FC) frame format which may provide support for multiple fabric FC networks, and may improve the performance of modularly-constructed switches. In one embodiment, the augmented FC frame format is modulated on a carrier signal and the frame includes: a start-of-frame field; a supplementary header field that follows the start-of-frame field; a frame header field that follows the supplementary header field; a cyclic redundancy code (CRC) checksum field; and an end-of-frame field that follows the CRC checksum field. The supplementary header field may include a destination tag that identifies a target fabric to which the frame is directed. Alternatively, or in addition, the supplementary header field may include an egress port identifier that identifies a switch port through which the frame is to exit a switch. The supplementary header may also include flags to request special handling by the receiver.